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SUBJECT: MUNICH SECURITY CONFERENCE OVERVIEW: MERKEL URGES
PRIMACY OF NATO; IRAN AND ENERGY SECURITY DISCUSSED

SUMMARY:

¶1. (SBU) The February 3-5 42nd Munich Conference on Security Policy ("Wehrkunde") on "Restoring the Transatlantic Partnership," explored a wide-range of security policy topics, including the future of NATO, its relationship with the EU, Russia's relationship with Europe and NATO, and Foreign and Security policy interests in Asia. German Chancellor Angela Merkel set the tone for the conference in a strongly pro-NATO keynote address (septel) in which she advocated the "primacy of NATO" for European security policy and chastised Iran - in the presence of Iranian Deputy FM Abbas Araghchi - for having crossed the "redline" by resuming nuclear enrichment activities. Because the Russian Deputy Prime Minister, the Georgian President and the Ukrainian Defense Minister participated in the conference, and because the beginning of the Conference overlapped with the IAEA Special Board of Governors' (BOG) Meeting, Iran and energy security were recurrent themes throughout the 3-day conference.

¶2. (SBU) On the margins of the conference, senior defense and foreign policy ministers from most European and several Asian governments met formally or informally in bilateral meetings. On the US side, SecDef Rumsfeld met with Chancellor Merkel, Defense Minister Jung and Georgian President Saakashvili. Deputy Secretary Zoellick met with NATO SYG de Hoop Scheffer, German National Security Advisor Heusgen (septel), German FM Steinmeier, and Indian NSA Narayanan. CODEL McCain's formal bilateral meetings included: the annual "Transatlantic Breakfast" hosted by MFA State Secretary Scharioth (septel); a meeting with German FM Steinmeier; a joint meeting with Estonian FM Paet and Lithuanian FM Valionis; and a separate meeting with Georgian President Saakashvili. End Summary.

GEORGIA'S ROLE IN INTERNATIONAL SECURITY POLICY

¶3. (U) Georgian President Saakashvili led off the conference with a dinner speech on Georgia's Role in International Security Policy. Saakashvili's comments were relatively muted (he barely mentioned Russia by name), and mainly made the case that Georgia belongs in the Euro-Atlantic community and is a good candidate for NATO membership. Although he mentioned Georgia's energy dependence on Russia, it was not the focus of his speech. However, other participants repeatedly mentioned Georgian

energy security concerns during the conference.

MERKEL PUTS NATO FIRST AND FIELDS TOUGH QUESTIONS

¶4. (SBU) Chancellor Merkel set the tone for the conference with a keynote address that emphasized that NATO must be for Europe and America the first forum for conducting strategic debates and considering military action. Her speech, which her staff acknowledges was largely re-written by her, and her adept fielding of questions, were the highlights of the conference.

DEFMINS DISCUSS "TESTS" OF U.S.-EUROPEAN PARTNERSHIP

¶5. (U) During a panel entitled "Europe and the United States: A Test of Partnership," SecDef Rumsfeld called for the world's great democracies - anchored by NATO - to deal effectively with terrorism, the "greatest challenge to our security in the 21st century." He described some of the key tasks ahead, such as: working to make the Proliferation Security Initiative a Success; helping countries in the Caucasus and Central Asia to train their security forces by utilizing Partnership for Peace programs; and continuing to transform NATO for the 21st Century by investing in the NATO Response Force, broader common funding, and encouraging NATO to develop an expeditionary culture and capability.

¶6. (U) On the same panel French DefMin Alliot-Marie alleged that the United Nations was the only true source of international legitimacy, cautioned against "spreading ourselves too thin" in areas where other regional

organizations are competent; suggested that the transatlantic partners should "rely on a European Union cut out to be a major power pole in the new international environment"; suggested that the "durability challenge of the transatlantic link depends on the ability to define a new partnership between the EU and North America," and called for making clearer the specificities of NATO and EU operations. She claimed that ESDP is better adapted to "lightning" operations and civil-military actions.

¶7. (U) UK Defense Minister Reid rebutted concerns expressed by Alliot-Marie and reinforced points made by SECDEF Rumsfeld with humor and irony. In response to Alliot-Marie's expressed concern about the dissonance of an orchestra where all instruments play at the same time, Reid suggested that NATO and the EU could effectively work together in the style of a jazz band. Alliot-Marie and Reid both defended the continued need for a nuclear deterrent.

MCCAIN COMMENTS ON IRANIAN THREAT, CALLS FOR POSSIBLE BOYCOTT OF ST. PETERSBURG G8 IN DISCUSSION OF NATO THEMES

¶8. (U) NATO SYG de Hoop Scheffer's remarks focused on: broader and more intense political consultations at NATO on issues ranging from the Balkans and Afghanistan to Africa and the Middle East, and energy security; NATO's growing operational commitments; progress on transformation, including achieving full operational capability for the NRF, strengthening NATO's access to strategic lift, and better funding mechanisms; the need to work more effectively with partners and to build a pragmatic, strategic partnership with the European Union; and the need to bring these themes together at the November 2006 NATO summit in Riga. In response to a question about a possible peacekeeping role for NATO in the Palestinian territories, the SYG stated that no NATO representative can talk to Hamas.

¶9. (U) German DefMin Jung said the dialogue within NATO must address all important security issues, citing Iran's nuclear program as a case in point. However, he cautioned

that NATO is not a mini-UN, nor the OSCE and warned against overextending NATO by attempting to assume all responsibility for guaranteeing peace and security. Jung said NATO and the EU must agree on the development of their respective capabilities for crisis management, noting that the political consultation allowed by Berlin-plus should be put into practice. NRF is the political litmus test for the strategic solidarity of the alliance partners, said Jung, and called for greater burden sharing.

¶10. (U) Senator McCain brought the discussion back to Iran, by noting that the IAEA Board of Governors had just voted in favor of a referral of Iran to the UNSC for violation of its NPT commitments. Calling upon Russia and China to support multilateral sanctions against Iran, including a prohibition on investment, a travel ban, and asset freeze for government leaders and nuclear scientists, he pointed out that, protected by a nuclear deterrent, Iran would feel unconstrained to sponsor terrorist attacks against any perceived enemy and stimulate other countries in the region to reconsider their arsenals.

¶11. (U) Turning his attention to Russia, Senator McCain said that under Putin, Russia is neither a democracy nor one of the world's leading economies and questioned whether the G8 leaders should attend the St. Petersburg summit. He said that by integrating reformist democracies like Georgia and Ukraine into transatlantic institutions, the zone of democratic peace could be extended into regions of vital interest to Western security. He suggested that transatlantic partners must extend tangible benefits to Ukraine as it moves towards reform and Western orientations, suggesting that a "tangible benefit" would be endorsement of a Membership Action Plan (MAP) at NATO's June Ministerial. In the question session following his speech, Senator McCain suggested that NATO could consider providing security for energy supply lines.

SENATOR LIEBERMAN URGES DRAMATICALLY INCREASED ROLE FOR
NATO IN DARFUR GENOCIDE AND ENFORCING IRAN SANCTIONS

¶12. (U) Leading off the panel on "Resolving Conflicts through International Cooperation" Albanian Prime Minister Berisha said economic underdevelopment, poverty and unemployment in the failed experiment that was Yugoslavia, could contribute to instability. He asserted that his government has zero tolerance for organized crime and criminal trafficking. Noting that international terrorism can be most effectively fought through international cooperation, he warned against leaving EU and NATO aspirant countries in Southeastern Europe hanging.

¶13. (U) Senator Lieberman said that the genocide taking place in Darfur creates an urgency that NATO do more by providing more training and logistic support to the African Union force. He suggested that NATO could manage command and control and logistics and provide necessary resources to sustain the operation and also enforce a no-fly zone over part of Darfur to stop aggression by Sudanese Forces and the Janjaweed militia.

¶14. (U) Ukrainian Defense Minister Grytsenko expanded on Senator McCain's comments in the previous panel, describing Russia as "pretending to be a member of the G8" and complaining that no one knows who is behind the holding company that has the monopoly on Russian fuel supply lines. He said that Ukraine has a good record of cooperation with NATO member states, especially in the context of NATO Balkans operations, in the Mediterranean, and in Iraq and Afghanistan, adding that Ukraine is willing to take on a larger role in shared security tasks. In response to a question on the need for regional security cooperation, Grytsenko agreed, noting that he wants to see increased security cooperation in the Black Sea region and "frozen" conflict zones in the South Caucasus, and Transnistria.

¶15. (U) The third day of the conference began with a Russian Deputy Prime Minister/Defense Minister Ivanov, German Foreign Minister Steinmeier, and Deputy Secretary Zoellick discussing "Russian, Europe and the World - Prospects for Cooperation on Global Security Issues." Ivanov asserted that the focus of Russia's key economic and political interests remains in Europe. He said that Russia is seeking to improve its export legislation, but argued that export control regimes must not be used as a cover-up for unfair competition or for ousting competitors from the military market. He called for establishment of a joint front for combating international terrorism under the aegis of the UN to: a) end loopholes in international law and domestic legislation; and b) overcome double standards in evaluating terrorist threat, including by reaching a common definition of "terrorism," alleging that the failure of the West to criticize terrorists in Chechnya the same way they criticized terrorists elsewhere reflected a double standard.

¶16. (U) Ivanov called for cooperation between Russia and Europe on energy. He urged that the mechanism of the NATO-Russia council be transformed from a "political factor," into "practical actions" of the Alliance and Russian armed forces. Ivanov said there is a rising concern about the destiny of the Conventional Forces Europe Treaty as NATO moves closer to the Russian borders, and faulted NATO for continuing to insist on linking ratification with implementation of the Istanbul commitments on Georgia and Moldova. He predicted that talks on the future of the CFE at the third review conference in Vienna in May will be "complex."

¶17. (U) In examining global security challenges, Deputy Secretary Zoellick said movements toward openness have

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cleared the way for the rise of "political Islam," noting a struggle now exists for the soul of Islam. He added that he hoped those who had raised their voices on the Danish cartoons also raise their voices on issues that go to the soul of Islam, such as bombings and beheadings. The Deputy Secretary noted that Russia has overlapping interests with

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Europe and the U.S., including internationalization of the

nuclear fuel cycle and in developing China as a responsible stakeholder in the international system. However, he expressed concerns about Russia, including that its "state capitalism" could impede economic development, and that Russia appeared to have a 19th Century view of the world, in which it seeks to keep neighbors weak and easily dominated. The experience of the U.S. and EU shows that weak neighbors export problems, while stronger neighbors tend to bring stability. The Deputy Secretary concluded by identifying four challenges that will define cooperation between the U.S, Europe, and Russia: 1) the leftover work from 1989 in the broader European sense; 2) the new challenges in the broader Middle East; 3) the rise of China; and 4) globalization.

GLOBAL FOREIGN AND SECURITY INTEREST IN ASIA

¶18. (SBU) By the time the final panel, consisting of Chinese Vice Minister of the PRC Central Committee of the community Party Zhang Zhijun, India National Security Advisor Narayanan and Japanese Senior Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Shiozaki on Global Foreign and Security Interests in Asia convened, most of the conference participants had departed. The discussion was generally non-controversial on themes such as regional economic cooperation, but became livelier when the Chinese

participant emotionally discussed the Taiwan issue and the visit of Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi to the war memorial.

¶19. This report was coordinated with Embassy Berlin.

¶20. Previous reporting from Munich is available on our SIPRNET website at www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/munich/.

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